



# **NOVA SCOTIA** **CANADA**

## **Provincial Victim Services Program Nova Scotia Department of Justice**

### **Child Victim & Witnesses Programs and Case Management Model**

March 1, 2011



## **Presentation Outline:**

- Overview of the Child Victim/Witness Program and the Counselling for Children Exposed to Intimate Partner Violence
- Case Management Model
- 2010 Child Case Statistics



# Child Victim/ Witness Program Background

- Introduced as a pilot project in 1993
- Integrated as a core program in 1996
- Offered province-wide through Provincial Victim Services Program
- Provides general information and support to child victims of crime and their supportive adults
- Provides non-evidentiary court preparation for child victims or child witnesses under age 19 who testify in criminal court proceedings



# Objectives of the Program:

- Increase the child's knowledge about court proceedings and roles of the key players
- Assist the child's understanding of how the court process unfolds
- Address the child's fears and reduce the anxiety associated with giving evidence
- Provide specific assistance in building communication skills focusing on the kinds of questions associated with cross-examination
- Emotional support to the child
- Victim/witness and their family





# Child Victim/Witness Program Delivery

The session is delivered approximately six (6) weeks prior to the actual date of testimony.

•**Session 1** uses tools such as: My Court Preparation Journal; What's My Job In Court; My Court Case; So You Have to Go To Court; and You're Not Alone.

•**Session 2:**

- Review of information from the first session
- Non-evidentiary role play of difficult questions
- Courtroom tour either alone or in consultation with the Crown Attorney
- Arrange for child to meet with Crown Attorney (may attend at Crown's request, but no discussion of evidence)

•**Debriefing**

- Involves a discussion of the court experience
- Debriefing to be completed within 48 hours of the child's testimony
- May be conducted on the telephone or face-to-face involving the child and their supportive adult

•**Other Services:**

- Booster Session if the child is required to testify again at a later date**
- Victim Impact Statement Assistance after a finding of guilt**



# Case Management System

- JEIN based case management system was implemented in March 2009
- Enhancements to the system:
  - Victim Services cases linked to court cases
  - Increased reporting capability
  - Centralized case processing



# Child Victim/Witness Cases 2010

- CVW Cases Opened 819
- Active CVW Cases 1259



## Critical File Summary

	Family Violence	Sex Offence	Homicide
Female	234	154	2
Male	61	19	3





# Length of Court Process

	Family Violence	High Risk	Sex Offences	Homicide
Average Days	214	200	495	344



## **Victim Services, Counselling for Children Who Witness Intimate Partner Violence**

- The program was introduced in January 2008.
- The Counselling for Children Who Witness Intimate Partner Violence Program offers professional counselling services to children.
- Children are affected by violence in their family. It can hurt as much as if the violence was done to them.
- The intimate partner violence must be reported to police, after a report is made an application is submitted to the program within one year of the crime.
- Once an application is approved a counselor is selected. Counselling is provided by private counselling practitioners within the community who are approved counsellors with our program.
- Counsellors must apply to become approved counsellors and meet certain criteria. The counselors bill our program directly for service provided.





# NOVA SCOTIA CANADA

## Here are some things that can happen to children when there is violence at home

Children are affected by violence in their family. It can hurt as much as if the violence was done to them. It affects them now, and it affects them later. It changes how they behave and how they deal with their feelings. It changes how they learn and grow up. It changes how they deal with people and situations.

Here are some things that can happen to children when there is violence at home

### babies and toddlers

- cry a lot
- can't sleep
- put on weight

### pre-schoolers

- cling to you
- get pushy, start fights
- worry, feel afraid

### early school-aged

- feel like the violence is their fault
- try to stop the abuse

### aged 6 to 10

- have trouble at school
- have trouble making friends

### teens

- skip school, drop out, run away
- have violent dates
- pretend there is no family violence to help them cope

These children can grow up accepting violence as part of life.

## Nova Scotia Department of Justice - Court Services Division - Victim Services

We offer help and information for victims of crime. There is no cost for this service.

Contact the Provincial Victim Services Office in your area:

**Dartmouth:** Serves all of HRM  
277 Pleasant Street, Suite 306  
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, B2Y 4B7  
Telephone: 424-3307

**Kentville:** Serves Annapolis, Kings, West Hants, Lunenburg, Queens, Shelburne, Yarmouth, and Digby Counties  
49 Cornwall Is St., Suite 204  
Kentville, Nova Scotia, B4N 2E3  
Telephone: 679-6201  
Toll Free: 1-800-565-1805

**New Glasgow:** Serves Pictou, Guysborough, East Hants, Antigonish, Colchester, and Cumberland Counties  
115 Maclean St., 2nd Floor  
New Glasgow, Nova Scotia, B2H 4M5  
Telephone: 755-7110  
Toll Free: 1-800-565-7912

**Sydney:** Serving Cape Breton, Richmond, Inverness & Victoria Counties  
136 Charlotte St., 4th floor  
Sydney, Nova Scotia, B1P 1C3  
Telephone: 563-3655  
Toll Free: 1-800-565-0071

### Criminal Injuries Counselling Program:

Contact number for all of Nova Scotia  
P.O. Box 7, Halifax, NS, B3J 2L6  
Telephone: 424-3309  
Fax: (902) 424-2056  
Toll Free: 1-888-470-0773



VICTIM  
SERVICES  
INITIATIVES

## Counselling for Children Who Witness Intimate Partner Violence



You can get help for your child, with counselling from the Criminal Injuries Counselling Program.

Locations and phone numbers are on the back of this pamphlet.



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# Counselling for Children Exposed to Intimate Partner Violence

	Applications Received	Applications Approved	Accessed Counselling
2008	13	12	9
2009	52	48	24
2010	121	99	19





## Criminal Injury Counselling for Children

	Applications Received	Applications Approved	Accessed Counselling
2008	68	61	22
2009	91	86	43
2010	106	92	23